

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): ~~A~~An acupuncture needle, comprising:

a shaft having a body and a tip; and

a handle attached to said body, said handle including a means for causing a vibration in said shaft when said handle is rotated, said means for causing a vibration including at least one flat portion.
2. (currently amended): The needle as set forth in claim 1, wherein said vibration causing means further comprises a portion of said handle having a cross-sectional shape that includes a circular portion and a chord portion.
3. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 1, wherein said vibration causing means comprises a portion of said handle that includes a triangular cross-sectional shape.
4. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 1, wherein said vibration causing means comprises a portion of said handle that includes a rectangular cross-sectional shape.
5. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 1, wherein said vibration causing means comprises a portion of said handle that includes a pentagonal cross-sectional shape.

6. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 1, wherein said vibration causing means comprises a portion of said handle that includes a hexagonal cross-sectional shape.

7. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 1, wherein said vibration causing means comprises a portion of said handle that includes a heptagonal cross-sectional shape.

8. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 1, wherein said vibration causing means comprises a portion of said handle that includes an octagonal cross-sectional shape.

9. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 1, wherein said vibration causing means comprises a portion of said handle that includes a star-shaped cross section.

10. (currently amended): ~~A~~An acupuncture needle comprising:
a shaft having a body and a tip; and
a handle attached to said body, said handle including a first cross-sectional shape that includes an circular portion and a chord portion, wherein end points of said chord are coincident with those of an arc of less than one-quarter of a circle having a radius corresponding to that of said circular portion.

11. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 10, wherein said handle includes a second cross-sectional shape different from the first cross-sectional shape and disposed at a position spaced longitudinally therefrom.

12. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 10, wherein said first cross-sectional shape includes a second chord portion.

13. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 10 in combination with an insertion guide tube.

14. (original): The needle as set forth in claim 1 in combination with an insertion guide tube.

15. (currently amended): A method of performing acupuncture comprising:
inserting an acupuncture needle into a body of a patient, a handle of said acupuncture needle including at least one flat portion; and
rotating a handle of the acupuncture needle so as to cause its shaft to vibrate.

16. (new): The needle as set forth in claim 1, wherein the shaft does not have a hollow lumen.

17. (new): The needle as set forth in claim 10, wherein the shaft does not have a hollow lumen.

18. (new): The method as set forth in claim 15, wherein the shaft does not have a hollow lumen.